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March 10, 2020

Dear Resource Family,

As a Resource parent, we know that children depend on you around the clock, every day of the year. The State of Maine has seasoned professionals across our agencies, including health experts and providers, who have risen to the challenge to prepare and respond to diseases, like Coronavirus. With federal public health officials informing us that the coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, is likely to spread further in the United States, I thought it was important to reach out to you directly with information. Some common questions and answers are below:

1. What precautions can I take to protect myself from Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Maine CDC reports that the risk of COVID-19 to Maine people continues to be low. However, it is important for all Maine residents to take proper precautions, including [following guidelines issued by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (U.S. CDC) such as:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid shaking hands as a greeting.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Additionally, if you are considering booking, or have upcoming travel planned, please review the U.S. CDC's [travel guidance](#). The Department of Administrative and Financial Services encourages you to stay-up-to-date on developments by seeking information through credible sources, such as the [Maine CDC](#) and [U.S. CDC](#).

2. What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

[Symptoms of COVID-19](#) can include fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

3. What if someone at home is coughing or sneezing?

Have tissues available for one-time use for coughs and sneezes with a trash receptacle for disposal. It is important to keep in mind that many things cause people to cough, such as allergies, dryness, post nasal drip, irritants, a 'tickle' in the throat, and more.

4. What if I think someone in my home is sick?

U.S. CDC guidance recommends calling your medical provider first., If you do not speak with a medical provider, please call the walk-in clinic first before going due to possible wait times and exposure risk.

5. What if someone in my home has been asked to self-monitor for symptoms?

If someone in your home has been asked by Maine CDC to self-monitor for symptoms, follow the precautions outlined above and self-monitor. If the person in your home becomes symptomatic, please check with a medical professional for guidance and contact your OCFS caseworker to make decisions and plans for the children in your home.

6. What if someone in my home is diagnosed with COVID-19?

If someone in your home has been diagnosed with COVID-19, immediately check with a medical professional for guidance and contact OCFS regarding decisions and plans for OCFS children in your home.

7. What if my foster child is diagnosed with COVID-19?


If a foster child in your home has been diagnosed with COVID-19, immediately notify OCFS and check with a medical professional for guidance.

8. Do I have to send my foster child to visits?

It is important for children and families to be able to visit. We ask that you use common sense precautions and keep children home when they are very sick and/or have a fever. The same precautions will be taken during visitations as above. Toys and equipment in visitation rooms have been removed and/or will be cleaned and disinfected in between visits. Hand sanitizer and tissues will be available and hand washing will be encouraged regularly.

Additionally, here is a [link](#) from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMSHA) that provides helpful guidance for talking with children about infectious disease outbreaks. As always, thank you for your dedicated work on behalf of children and families of Maine.

Sincerely,



Todd A. Landry
Director, Office of Child and Family Services